

DECLARATION OF JOSEPH REWITZER

My name is Joseph Rewitzer. I declare under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge

1. My name is Joseph Rewitzer. I am 29 years old. My DOC number is 237984.
2. I have been imprisoned at MCF-Stillwater since January of 2019. I live in unit B-west which is the high security/unemployed unit. I had to quit my job in the prison in mid-July so I could enroll in college full-time.
3. Unit B-west has four floors with about 60 cells to a floor. Before May, the cells had one or two people in them. Now, all the cells are single cells.
4. I have been tested for COVID-19 twice—the first time was in May, and the second test was mid-July. I didn't receive results. The staff here told us that if we tested positive, we would be taken to segregation.
5. I had symptoms like COVID-19 symptoms back in late February. At that time, COVID-19 was being reported on the news, but it was only in Washington State. I had a high fever of 103.7 degrees, a lot of mucus and phlegm, and I couldn't lay down because it was so hard to breathe. It was the sickest I've ever been. My treatment was to be locked in my cell for 7 days in my unit. I was told by staff that they considered taking me to the hospital, but they never did. I actually asked if I could have COVID-19, but the health staff laughed it off and said that a lot of inmates at the prison had what I had and it was just the flu. When I asked if I could get tested for COVID-19, the staff told me the U.S. didn't have tests.
6. At the same time, three other people in my unit had similar symptoms and were also locked in their cells.
7. I haven't seen any extra handwashing/hand sanitizing stations in our around the unit.
8. Starting in early April, Corrections Officers (COs) started bringing meals for us to eat in our cells. When the food arrives it is a mess. It has usually spilled all over and it is cold. We are served a meal in the morning and a meal at night. Along with the first meal, we are given a bag with an orange, fun size bag of chips, and then a small mini sandwich. That is our second meal. This is less calories than we used to get by about half. The breakfast is not "enhanced" at all and is the same it has always been.
9. Starting around mid-March, the DOC suspended some work details, and cancelled educational programming, library time, visiting, and religious services. It seemed pointless to suspend these activities because the inmates were together in the units anyway, and in some places, like the library, we would've had more room to social distance or spread out. Cancelling these services didn't seem to be aimed at doing anything to combat the virus.
10. I've received two cloth masks—they are 2-ply and square. The strings that attach to the ears last just a couple days to a week. But because it's mandatory to wear the masks, most inmates sew strips of fabric using kits from the canteen or try to tie them so they stay up.
11. It doesn't seem like staff is concerned about social distancing. I have never seen or witnessed the staff comment on social distancing or try to enforce social distancing. I haven't seen any memos from the DOC about social distancing.

12. For two weeks around mid-March we had a utility COVID cleaning crew that consisted of extra people to clean. After the two weeks, the cleaning crew went back to normal because people quit or were fired and not replaced. Now, the cleaning crew is the same size and they are cleaning the same way as they did before COVID-19.
13. We only have cleaning supplies available to us during our time out of our cells, which is currently two hours a day. But you can't really use the cleaning supplies on the phones or the showers, because you have to wait in line to use both. You can't get out of line to check out cleaning supplies and then hop back in again. So there is no way to clean the shower before you get in it, or clean the phone before you use it after a bunch of people have just used it.
14. I have Lyme disease, which suppresses my immune system. I applied for CMR around April 28 but never heard anything back. My caseworker told me that my MNSTARR score is too high for me to qualify. I haven't been told what my MNSTARR score is or how it is calculated. It is a total mystery.
15. Since April 2, 2020, access to health care has been limited. If an inmate asks for health services, a nurse may respond to the call, but you can't see the doctor unless it's COVID-related or life-threatening.
16. Myself, and I know other inmates, are concerned about the lack of protocols here if there is COVID-19, because the treatment seems to be that you have to go the hole, which is like punishment. Inmates will absolutely not be reporting symptoms because they don't want to go to segregation. Everyone here thinks that in segregation, you don't get your property for a week, meaning that you don't have things like TV or canteen. People would rather just be sick in their cells.
17. One of the staff members told me that two employees of the prison contracted COVID-19. We were not told in a memo or any official release from the DOC. We knew someone in the prison must have contracted it because visits were cancelled.
18. I have never received any information from the DOC about whether anyone has contracted the virus in the prison. The DOC was having administration meetings for about 1.5 months that consisted of an inmate who acted as a unit representative and an administrator. My rep asked about contract tracing and for information about where people who tested positive lived or worked, because we didn't even know if it was a staff member or an inmate. The DOC didn't give us that information.
19. Showers and the bathroom stalls are not spaced out to promote social distancing. In my unit, the showers are right next to each other, with a barrier that is about chest-high. You're only two feet away from the person next to you.

DATED: August 20, 2020

/s/ Joseph Rewitzer

Joseph Rewitzer